CLAIM AMENDMENTS

The claims have been amended as follows:

1. (Amended) A method comprising:

receiving a request from a first computer system for identification of a second computer system;

retrieving a processor number [an identifier] that identifies a processor of the second computer system;

encrypting the processor number [identifier] with a key associated with the first computer system to produce a hash value; and

providing the hash value to the first computer system in response to the request.

3. (Amended) The method of claim 1[2], further comprising:

executing a processor instruction; and

retrieving the number in response to the execution of the instruction.

6. (Amended) An apparatus comprising:

an interface adapted to:

receive a request from a computer system for identification of the apparatus, and

furnish a hash value that identifies the apparatus to the computer system; and

a processor coupled to the interface and adapted to:

encrypt a processor number [an identifier] that identifies the processor [apparatus] with a key associated with the computer system to produce the hash value.

10. (Amended) An article comprising a storage medium readable by a first processor-based system, the storage medium storing instructions to cause a processor to:

receive a key from another processor-based system for identifying said another processor-based [the first] system,

determine whether the key is valid,

based on the identification, selectively authorize encryption of an identifier that identifies the first system with the key to produce a hash value.

21. (Amended) The method of claim 1[2], wherein the processor number identifies a microprocessor of the second computer system.

23. (Amended) The computer system of claim 6[7], wherein the processor number identifies a microprocessor of the apparatus.